



DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION NO. 150
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Revised and Reissued: May 26, 2020

I. Purpose

The City of St. Louis provides many of its employees with technology resources and a local area network with access to the Internet in order to enhance the programs and services provided by the City, conduct City business, and ensure that staff is equipped with the necessary tools for communication, research, collaboration and other tasks required to fulfill job obligations. Specifically, social media tools improve interactivity between the City and its citizens and are also utilized by many employees in their personal lives.

The purpose of this administrative regulation is to establish rules for managing the City's official social media sites and accounts and for employees utilizing social media for personal use.

II. Definitions

Blog: A self-published diary or commentary on a particular topic that may allow others to post responses, reactions or comments. The term is short for "web log."

Page: The specific portion of a social media site where content is displayed and managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.

Post: Content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.

Profile: Autobiographical or personal information that a user provides on a social networking site.

Social Media: A category of Internet-based resources that integrates user-generated content and user participation. This includes, but is not limited to, websites created by the City, social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn),

microblogging sites (Twitter), photo and video-sharing sites (Flickr, Instagram, Snapchat), wikis (Wikipedia), blogs and news sites (Digg, Reddit).

Social Network: Online platform where users create profiles, share information and socialize with others using a range of technologies.

Speech: Expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken words, in writing, by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, video, emoji, or related forms of communication.

III. Employee Privacy

Employees should have no expectation of privacy with respect to City/department computers, including mobile devices, or network systems. The City of St. Louis reserves the right to search, monitor and/or log computer or network activity, including email communications, with or without notice.

IV. Use of Social Media When Authorized to Speak or Post on Behalf of the City

The following rules apply to the use of social media when speaking or posting materials, information or comments on any social media or social network on behalf of the City, a City department, division, agency ("department") or any City official or appointing authority.

- A. Official social media accounts for any of the City's departments may only be established with the approval of the appointing authority for the department utilizing such a social media account.
- B. If possible, authorized social media pages used to conduct official City business should link to the official website of the City or department.
- C. Only employees who have the written authorization of their appointing authorities to speak, or post materials, information or comments on behalf of the City, a City department, or any City official may do so. Such employees shall limit posts to social media websites and social media accounts of the City and its departments, unless specifically authorized to post materials, information or comments on a site outside the City's websites and social media accounts.

- D. Employees posting materials or information should be aware that what is posted may be in the public domain forever, even if later deleted.
- E. Copyright, trademark, and service mark restrictions shall be observed when posting materials.
- F. Employees posting materials or information shall identify themselves by name and title or rank.
- G. Employees shall not post comments or content about political activity, a political party, or a candidate in a partisan election. Further, employees shall not link the social media accounts of said party or candidate to any City website or social media account.
- H. Employees shall not post comments or content regarding an employee's private business activities.
- I. Employees shall not post confidential information, including personal information about another employee.
- J. Employees shall not use personally owned devices to post comments or content concerning their job-related activities without the prior approval of the appointing authority or his/her designee.
- K. Employees of the Police Division, Airport Police Department, City Courts, Division of Corrections, Law Department and all other City departments with access to criminal justice information:
 - 1. When speaking, posting materials, transmitting, or disseminating information or comments, employees shall not disclose, without prior approval of their appointing authority or his/her designee, any information or record that reveals confidential criminal justice information or any information or record that is considered a closed record, including but not limited to, the following examples of information or records:
 - a. related to any active criminal investigation, including investigative report, all investigative photos, videos, audio records, supplemental reports, lab reports and all other evidentiary material;
 - b. revealing any crime scene photographs and video recordings which depict or describe a deceased

person in a state of dismemberment, decapitation or similar mutilation;

- c. reasonably likely to pose a clear and present danger to the safety of any victim, witness, undercover officer or other person;
- d. likely to jeopardize a criminal investigation including information which would disclose the identity of a confidential source or suspect not in custody;
- e. acquired by way of a complaint or report of a crime by telephone contact using the emergency number "911";
- f. disclosing the victim of any offense as provided in Chapter 566, RSMo.;
- g. contained in any official record held by the Police Division or Airport Police Department regarding a matter for which a person was arrested and charged but the case was subsequently *nolle prossed*, dismissed, or the accused was found not guilty or suspended imposition of sentence was given;
- h. related to juveniles; or
- i. concerning firearms ownership.

(NOTE: THE ABOVE IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST)

- 2. No employee may speak, post or comment on any information on behalf of the Police Division without written authorization of the Police Commissioner or his/her designee or on behalf of the Airport Police Department without written authorization of the Director of Airports or his/her designee, including the following:
 - a. information about an ongoing criminal investigation, including but not limited to photographs, videos and audio recordings;
 - b. information related to Police Division and/or Airport Police Department law enforcement training, tactics, law enforcement operations and activities or work-related assignments;

- c. images of suspects, arrestees, crime scenes or evidence unless for law enforcement purposes;
- d. statements about on or off-duty use of force incidents involving any commissioned officer;
- e. comments related to the guilt or innocence of any suspect or arrestee or pending prosecutions; or
- f. information which would disclose techniques, procedures or guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions.

V. Personal Use of Social Media

The following rules apply to personal use of social media:

- A. Employees shall not access social media sites for personal use during work hours, unless on an authorized break. Social media sites shall never be accessed during work hours in connection with an employee's secondary employment.
- B. Employees' personal use of social media must not be attributable to the City or the employees' department, division, agency or appointing authority.
 - 1. Work email addresses shall not be used to register for social media sites unless the purpose is directly related to an employee's job and the employee has the approval of his/her appointing authority.
 - 2. The City seal or any logo, patch, badge, or uniform of the City or any department/division shall not be posted on any social media account.
 - 3. Employees shall not state or imply that they speak for the City, for a City department, division, agency, or office, or any City official.
- C. Employees shall not post, transmit, share, or otherwise disseminate content that disparages a person or group of persons based on that person's or group's race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, religion, marital status, disability, age (40 years and older), or genetic information.

- D. Employees shall not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate content that threatens violence.
 - E. Employees shall not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate the following:
 - 1. information pertaining to the operations of the City of St. Louis which the employee knows to be false;
 - 2. information that is closed or confidential under the provisions of any open meetings law or any other law, including but not limited to the Missouri Sunshine Law, RSMo. 610.010, *et seq.*; or
 - 3. information related to the employee's own violations, mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority or endangerment of the public health or safety.
 - F. In addition to all other provisions contained in this Section, employees shall not post, transmit, or disseminate records containing any criminal justice information which are closed pursuant to RSMo. 610.100-205 or contrary to any other law governing the dissemination of criminal justice information, including but not limited to the examples of records and/or information referenced in paragraph IV.K above.
- VI. Violation of this policy may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.
- VII. Employees should be aware that they may be subject to civil litigation and/or criminal prosecution or both for:
- A. Publishing or posting false information that harms the reputation of another person, group, or organization (defamation);
 - B. Publishing or posting private facts or personal information about someone, that has not been previously revealed to the public, is not of legitimate public concern, and would be offensive to a reasonable person, without his/her permission;
 - C. Using someone else's name, likeness, or personal attributes without that person's permission for an exploitative purpose; and/or

- D. Publishing the creative work of another, trademarks, or certain confidential business information without permission of the owner.

Any questions concerning this Administrative Regulation should be referred to Employee Relations at 314-622-3563.

DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL

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Director